

Student/Parent Handbook 2023-2024

A non-traditional academic environment in which the student is respected and expectations are high. Cassata Catholic High School implements a common sense approach to education and holds each student accountable with a caring staff and a comfortable setting.

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OUR MISSION

Cassata is a coeducational Catholic high school with a nurturing staff that provides a rigorous curriculum for students who desire a unique, customized environment that prepares them for college and their chosen career path.

Cassata's open enrollment, self-paced learning, and flexible schedule enables students of all backgrounds to raise their educational level, complete their secondary education, and become healthy, independent, productive citizens.



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Foreword

The purpose of this handbook is to ensure that all rules and procedures are clearly understood and enforced consistently. The employees of Cassata Catholic High School believe in each student's ability to succeed and as a result, set high standards and expectations based on the individual's ability level.

The family, especially the parent/guardian, plays an integral role in the student's success in the educational process. Parents are expected to take an active role by participating in parent/student/teacher conferences, providing positive support, and calling the school when a concern arises. Parents are welcome and encouraged to call and speak to teachers, to set up appointments, to sit in on classes, and to participate in school functions throughout the year.

Vision Statement

Inspired by Christ, Cassata Catholic High School seeks to advance justice in the world by engaging the social, cultural, political, and economic realities of our day. Through a culture of success, we seek the development of each person's (including the administration, faculty, students, and parents) full potential within a climate of joy, respect, challenge, cooperation, and celebration.

Identity Statement

Cassata Catholic High School is a private Roman Catholic high school with an individualized instruction curriculum designed to serve students of all ages who wish to complete the requirements for their high school diploma or prepare for the GED. Tuition is based on a sliding scale.

Philosophy

Cassata Catholic High School serves individuals who, for various reasons, find their needs unmet in more traditional educational institutions. Cassata's programs enable students of all academic backgrounds to raise their educational skills and to complete their secondary education. This is accomplished via personalized academic advising program, which promotes individual achievement, as well as emotional and social growth.

Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy as to Students (Diocesan Policy 1240)

Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth schools admit students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Religious educational institutions are exempt from Civil Rights legislation in the employment and enrollment of individuals of a particular religious persuasion. Preference in employment and admissions may be given to Catholic staff and students in the Catholic Schools of the Diocese.

Asbestos

In compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) and EPA asbestos regulations, our school was inspected by EPA accredited and state certified asbestos building inspectors to determine the locations and type of asbestos-containing building materials within the school. A management plan developed by an EPA accredited and state certified asbestos management planner, details the inspection, required response actions and methods to maintain asbestos-containing building materials within our building. This management plan is available for your review by appointment through the school office.



Program Goals

Educating and preparing the student for the future are the primary program goals at Cassata. During the educational process, total personal development is achieved through:

- A quality academic program, which is designed to meet the needs of the individual student, while promoting optimal individual achievement
- An effective work habit and study skills program
- An atmosphere which encourages growth in the areas of social sensitivity, responsibility and self-discipline
- Opportunities to develop greater cultural awareness

Accreditation

Cassata is part of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth and is fully accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department. Instructors are qualified in the subject area taught and hold Texas Teacher Certifications. A diploma from Cassata allows a student to attend any college or university provided admissions requirements are met.

Programs and Requirements

Cassata offers two educational programs designed to meet the unique needs of each individual. Students are strongly encouraged to study for a high school diploma. Most students find the Endorsement Diploma to be the most beneficial and advantageous. However, for others this is not practical. Therefore, CCHS offers the Foundation Diploma or the GED.

High School Program – All students must take the TABE test prior to enrollment at Cassata. Admission requires a minimum ninth grade reading/math level on the TABE test for students to be able to take core high school classes. Lower scores may result in taking remedial reading and math classes. All students are required to have passed either the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) or TABE prior to graduation. A deficiency plan may be activated after academic counseling if the test has not been passed by the final month of studies at Cassata at the discretion of the administration.

The graduation requirements for the two diplomas are:

	Foundation Diploma (22 credit hours)	Endorsement Diploma (26 credit hours)
English	4 credits	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits	4 credits
Science	3 credits	4 credits
Social Studies	3 credits	4 credits
Physical Education	1 credit	1 credit
Language Other Than English	2 credits	2 credits
Fine Arts	1 credit	1 credit
Speech	Proficiency	0.5 credits
Electives	5 credits	5.5 credits
Total	22 credits	26 credits



Students will be required to take one course of Theology per each semester at Cassata.

Each Cassata student is required to attend weekly Mass.

Each student must earn a minimum of 3.0 credits (complete 6 courses) during the entire school year in order to remain at Cassata.

General Educational Development Program (GED) – Admission requires a minimum tenth grade reading/math level. This course of study prepares students for successful completion of the high school equivalency examination.

Testing

Each student is tested before enrollment using the TABE to determine the student's placement within Cassata's educational program. The cost for this test is \$15. Students are scheduled in classes based on the results of this test and on an evaluation of official transcripts.

All students are required to have passed either the Texas State Initiative (TSI) or TABE prior to graduation. A deficiency plan may be activated after academic counseling if the test has not been passed by the final month of studies at Cassata at the discretion of the administration.

Academic testing information and results may be shared with other schools of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth for academic, enrollment, or placement purposes.

Admission of Students (Diocesan Policy 5000)

It is a privilege and a grace to be educated in a Catholic school. The schools and the Diocese retain the right to disallow a student to attend, continue attending, or to re-enroll in a school. Any enrollment prior to the first day of school, including but not limited to advanced enrollment, pre-enrollment, or continuing enrollment of a student, is a conditional enrollment subject to review and termination by the school at any time. Prior to the first day of school, the school does not have to state the reasons, or have grounds, for revoking or denying a conditional enrollment of a student. The school does not have to state the reasons for denying enrollment of a student at any point during the year. The conduct of a student or a parent/guardian of the student (including any lifestyle, other conduct, or advocacy of a matter that is contrary to the Catholic faith or that may cause scandal, disruption, or confusion within the school community) may be grounds for the school revoking or denying the enrollment of a student at any time. All decisions of admission, including revocation of admission, are guided by the Catholic faith and are necessarily ecclesiastical in nature.

Students should not be denied admission to a Catholic school because of a disability unless the disability seriously impairs the student's ability to successfully complete the school's academic program or unless the school cannot provide sufficient care or provide reasonable accommodation for the student. The determination as to whether the school may provide reasonable accommodations for the student or applicant is made on a case-by-case basis. Under some circumstances, medically justifiable limitations may be placed on the admission/retention of students with infectious diseases and/or life-threatening illnesses.

International Students may be admitted in accordance with the requirements of the United States Department of Justice and the Department of Immigration and Naturalization. Students seeking admission under F-1 status must request an I 20 form from the Catholic Schools Office.

The enrollment or registration and attendance of a student at a Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth school constitutes an expressed agreement on the part of the student, as well as the student's parents/guardians,

to comply with the school's policies and procedures and demonstrate commitment to the school's mission. Failure to read the material contained in the handbook does not excuse the student or the student's parents/guardians from responsibility for knowing and following the policies, procedures, and regulations in the handbook.

Students applying for admission must present a copy of the current report card and standardized test results. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program the school will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student is part of the admission process. Testing in certain academic areas may be held for new, incoming students.

All new students will be given a probationary period of one semester. If during this probationary period there are any concerns, a student may be asked to withdraw from the school. The recommendation and decision of the school is final.

MISSION POLICY IN RELATION TO ADMISSIONS

Parents of students enrolling their children in a Catholic school must understand, affirm, and support the school's role and primary mission as guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church. Parents must acknowledge that they have read and understand, affirm, and support the expectations and the mission of the school as guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church. Parents or students who the school determines are not able to meet these expectations or support the mission of the school and teachings of the Catholic Church may not be admitted to the school. Students who are experiencing confusion regarding their sexual identity may be admitted as long as they are open to being accompanied and guided according to the Gospel as upheld in the teachings of the Catholic Church and will follow the mission and policies of the school. Any student whose gender has been legally changed from their biological sex, or who has chemically or surgically altered their God-given biology, may not be eligible for enrollment.

WITHDRAWAL

If at any time before or after admission the school believes that a student or parent/guardian of a student cannot accept the guidance and direction that is offered, is unwilling or unable to meet the expectations of admission, or is unwilling or unable to follow the Gospel as upheld in the teachings of the Catholic Church or the mission or policies of the school, then denial of enrollment, withdrawal, exclusion, or expulsion may be necessary. If a student or parent/guardian acts to legally change the student's gender or takes steps to chemically or surgically alter the student's God-given biological sex, then the student will be dismissed from the school, after the parent/guardian is first given the opportunity to withdraw the student from the school.

IMPLEMENTATION

PRIVILEGE

Being educated in a Catholic school is a grace and a privilege, not a right of the student. The conduct of a student or a parent/guardian of the student (including any lifestyle, other conduct, or advocacy of a matter that is contrary to the Catholic faith or that may cause scandal, disruption, or confusion within the school community) may cause the student to lose the privilege of attending a Catholic school.

PARISHIONERS – NON-PARISHIONERS

A parish school's admission policy should give preference to parishioners. Students from other parishes are to be admitted, if possible. Students of other religious beliefs may be admitted, if space permits.

Students enrolling at Cassata may be required to sign a 4-week probationary behavior contract and a 6-week probationary academic contract. Students who are in violation of either of the said

contracts may be withdrawn. Likewise, students may be withdrawn if the needs of the student are not being met or the student's needs are greater than Cassata can provide.

Non-Parental/Non-Legal Guardian Enrollment & Decision Making (Diocesan Policy 5050)

If a non-parent/non-custodial guardian wishes to enroll a child in a school of the Diocese, or make decisions on behalf of the child, they must provide valid Authorization Agreement for Voluntary Adult Caregiver that conforms with chapter 34 of the Texas Family Code authorizing them to enroll the child or make certain other decisions on behalf of the child. If the child is 18 or will be 18 during the school year, the non-parent/non-custodial guardian must contact the principal/president. Their enrollment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. This includes any decisions being made during the school year.

An Authorization Agreement for Voluntary Adult Caregiver is the proper “minor power of attorney” promulgated by the State of Texas. The Authorization Agreement for Voluntary Adult Caregiver can be found at https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/site_map/forms.asp

Diocese Appeal 5220

If the parent or the guardian wishes to appeal the principal's expulsion decision, a written appeal must be mailed to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) days from the date the parent or guardian is notified of the principal's expulsion decision. The Superintendent's decision will be conveyed to the parent or guardian by either the electronic email on file with the school, the home address on file with the school, or by meeting in person, electronically, or telephonically. The decision of the Superintendent is final and is not subject to any other appeal, grievance, mediation, or conciliation process of the Diocese.

Tuition and Fees

A student is not guaranteed enrollment until registration, fees AND the first month's tuition is PAID IN FULL. No student may begin classes until payment and paperwork needed is complete. Tuition must be paid by the 1st of each month. **A late fee of \$25.00 is assessed for payments made after the 5th of the month. Automatic withdrawal is available through FACTS. CCHS accepts cash, checks, and money orders for payment.** A contractual agreement that contains detailed information regarding financial policies must be signed by the student and parent. Due to cost, statements are not mailed home.

Tuition and fees are non-refundable

Tuition and fees must be paid in full and all textbooks returned before records, transcripts, or other information is released by Cassata Catholic High School. Tuition must be paid by the 5th of each month.

The Business Office will work with students and parents who experience difficulty with tuition payments. **It is the responsibility of the parent to contact the Business Office immediately when the financial situation of the family changes so that arrangements can be made.**

Students suspended from school for more than three days or suspended twice in one semester may be re-admitted on a probationary contract and may be assessed full tuition rate.

Tuition, based on a sliding scale, makes Cassata affordable for all families. Any student falling behind the equivalent of two months in payments will be withdrawn from school until payment is made in full.



Tuition Assistance

To receive tuition assistance all of the following documents must be submitted through the FACTS Management system: <https://online.factsmgt.com/>

- Current Tax Return
- Paycheck stubs for Parents/Guardians and Student
- Documentation of **ALL** of the following that apply: Child Support, Retirement Benefits, Disability, Social Security, and any other financial support

Internal Information (Diocesan Policy 3240)

Cassata Catholic High School is part of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth. As such, when appropriate, any student/parent record or information possessed by the School, including academic, developmental, behavioral, disciplinary, financial, or contact/identifying information, may be shared internally within the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth (including its departments, schools, parishes, priests or the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Advancement Foundation).

Academic testing information and results may be shared with other schools of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth for academic, enrollment, or placement purposes.

Additionally, any information submitted in or with any financial aid application (including FACTS) may be shared with the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Advancement Foundation, their affiliates, any tuition assistance board of the diocese, parish, or school, or the Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation to consider in awarding financial aid or developing additional tuition assistance programs.”

Withdrawal and Transfer (Diocesan Policy 5230)

WITHDRAWAL is the voluntary termination of a student's enrollment by the parents or guardian without provision for enrollment in another school. Students should be encouraged to complete their education if at all possible.

TRANSFER is the voluntary termination of a student's enrollment by the parents or guardian with provision for the student to be enrolled in another school. A parent or guardian may decide to transfer a student at any time and for any reason or the principal and parents may mutually agree that the needs of a student will best be served in another school setting.

It should be noted that Withdrawal and Transfer are considered to be voluntary on the part of the parents or guardian.

The records of a student who has had the privilege of attending a Catholic school and was withdrawn because of the disruptive influence caused by the student's parent shall show that the student withdrew or transferred, unless the parent refuses to remove the student from the school after having been notified that the student is to transfer to another school. In this case, the student will be expelled and their records will reflect the expulsion.

IMPLEMENTATION

When a student withdraws or transfers, a notation of the fact is made, as required, on all necessary records and correspondence.

In some cases, a student's academic, emotional, or social needs might be better served in an alternate

academic setting. The principal or counselor should advise the parents of the availability of such alternatives. A mutual agreement to transfer, reached out of sincere concern for the student, is preferable to utilization of suspension or expulsion procedures. A school may require a student either to transfer or to withdraw when the conduct of the parent of the student is disruptive to the school, or to a teacher in the school.

In the case of a transfer, the principal shall complete an Exit Report and give it to the parents or guardian together with the student's report card and health card. In the case of a transfer between Catholic schools, the principal must call the principal of the previous school BEFORE interviewing, testing, or registering the student. Communication between Catholic school administrators is necessary regarding expulsion, transfers, and withdrawals among Diocesan schools. The Catholic Schools Office must be contacted. If the family has an outstanding balance at the previous school, then that must be cleared before the student may be accepted at another school in the system.

Should the receiving school request it, additional information is to be provided and/or a copy of the permanent record may be sent directly to the receiving school by the previous school.

Reimbursement for School Costs and Attorneys' Fees (Diocesan Policy 5235)

The School recognizes the financial sacrifice many of its families make to participate in the school community. Out of respect for this sacrifice and in recognition of the School's responsibility to wisely steward financial resources for the benefit of all members of the school community, the School has implemented the following policy:

From time to time, the School is required to retain outside legal counsel to respond to parent requests or demands, attorney requests or demands on behalf of a parent or student, requests or subpoenas for testimony or documents in legal proceedings to which the School is not a party, or to address other issues affecting or involving only one or a few students or families. In such situations, the School is typically required to expend finite financial resources to address an issue which otherwise affects only a very small portion of the school community. To ensure that the school community at large is not adversely impacted in such situations, the School will, when the chief administrator of the School in his or her sole discretion deems it appropriate, require the family or families involved to reimburse the School for attorney's fees, costs of court, and other expenses incurred.

Accordingly, each person who acknowledges his or her agreements to the contents of this Handbook, either by written or electronic signature or by enrolling a student in the School, agrees that, in the School's absolute and sole discretion, he or she shall indemnify and reimburse the School and its officers, employees, agents, and representative ("Indemnitees") on demand from and for any and all attorneys' fees and related costs, including without limitation the cost of responding to parent or attorney requests or demands, requests for documents or other records or information arising from, in connection with, or related to 1) a violation of any provision of this Handbook, 2) any request or demand made upon the School which pertains to a legal proceeding or dispute to which the School is not a party, 3) threatening or harassing communications directed to any Indemnitee, or 4) threatened or actual litigation against any Indemnitee which does not result in a final and appealable judgement adverse to the Indemnitee.



Community Support

Cassata Catholic High School could not exist without the support of our community. Almost three-fourths of our operating budget comes from the gifts of foundations, corporations, organizations, and individuals. Donors subsidize all students, regardless of the amount of tuition being paid. Every Cassata student benefits from this support. During the school year, students are encouraged to write letters to supporters of Cassata detailing their experience and updating their successes.

Goal Setting

Each teacher will review their course outline and expectations with the students. Based on need, the teacher may set up a Goal Sheet to outline expectations for the day, or a Personal Action Agreement as a statement of commitment detailing the student's academic and personal goals for the semester. These will be reviewed with the student to ensure each student's progress in meeting his or her individual goals. **All students are expected to perform a minimum of one hour of homework nightly per subject/course.**

Class Schedules

Morning Session*	Monday - Friday	8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Afternoon Session*	Monday - Friday	12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

*Each session includes 3 periods of 1 hour duration each.

Students are encouraged to receive additional assistance from instructors (Tutoring) during the following time periods:

8:00 – 8:25 a.m. (11:35 – 12:20 by appointment only), 3:35 – 4:00 p.m.

Student Arrival/Departure and Parking

Each Parent/Guardian must secure transportation to and from school for their student. Upon arrival to campus, students are required to go inside the building and report to class or designated areas.

Once inside the building, students are not allowed to leave campus without authorization from the office. If a student leaves campus without permission after they have arrived for school, we cannot ensure their safety and they are in violation of our policy, and are subject to additional disciplinary actions. Students are expected to leave promptly when school business is completed.

Students who attend both sessions may leave during lunch and then return for the afternoon periods as these are two separate sessions. Students who wish to stay on campus during lunchtime, are required to stay in the student lounge area (downstairs).

In the event a student is sent home due to illness, behavioral issues, or any other reason, the parent/guardian is responsible for arranging to pick up the student in a timely manner. All students must be picked up no later than 30 minutes after dismissal. While waiting for their ride, students must remain in the lounge area downstairs. If a student is not picked up, Cassata reserves the right to escort your student to the police substation located on the corner of Magnolia and Hemphill to wait for their ride.

Student parking is designated as the area directly **behind** the school. A parking pass must be purchased for \$20 per year with a valid driver's license and current insurance. The parking pass must be visible in the vehicle to park in the CCHS lot. Students are not to congregate in the parking lot before or after school. Students are not allowed to park on the streets within a 2-block radius of the school. Driving to school is a privilege that may be revoked if reckless or careless driving is observed.



Custody Issues

The intent of Cassata Catholic High School is to be supportive of all families. To assist Cassata in providing the necessary information CCHS asks for the following:

Divorced or separated parents must file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce or separation decree with the office. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, Cassata will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. If there is a court order specifying that information should not be given to the non-custodial parent, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide Cassata with a court certified copy of the court order. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that had not been made known to the school in the appropriate manner.

Individualized Instruction

Cassata offers individualized instruction courses that allow students the opportunity to learn at their own individual rate. The goal is for each student to continue making steady progress toward reaching individual goals. Students are expected to complete homework in order to earn 6.5 credits per year. **This means that completion of at least six academic courses each semester is required to earn credits at an acceptable rate. This can only be accomplished by utilizing class time as well as doing homework.**

Students are expected to work at their own pace and complete each course within 6 to 12 weeks (9 to 15 weeks for Math and science courses) and with 90% attendance, this can be achieved. This does not mean that they are allowed to "take a day off" because they are ahead of schedule or because they have done a large amount of homework. It is imperative that class time be utilized appropriately.

Students not meeting expectations based on their individualized academic programs will meet with a counselor and/or an administrator to discuss possible solutions. This meeting may include a parent or guardian and **possibly result in loss of tuition assistance or dismissal from the program.**

Counseling Program

Group and individual academic counseling is available to all students.

Therapeutic counseling is not available at CCHS. However, CCHS works with other agencies that do offer this type of counseling. Based on staff recommendation, a student may be required to seek help and support at one of these agencies or similar agencies that address concerns outside CCHS's normal scope. This may be required for anger control, alcohol/drug dependence, family issues, grief counseling, etc. and may be required before or after school or through an outside agency.

Community Service

Each student is required to perform a minimum of 5 hours of Community Service per semester of attendance to graduate. In order to receive updated information regarding community service hours, students should attend Student Council meetings or speak with the College Advisor. Each student is expected to record their own hours and submit them to the school office.

Student Council

The Student Council plans events, organizes fund-raising activities, and conducts other business to benefit the school. All students are encouraged to participate. The Student Council is responsible for

CCHS's student activities throughout the entire school year.

Dual Enrollment

Dual credit courses are classes that high school students complete for which they will receive both high school and college credit at the same time and are offered to students who meet certain requirements. The first requirement is that the students pass at least one part of the TSI Exam offered by and taken at the college. Additionally, the student must have a 2.7 GPA and must meet with CCHS College Advisor. Finally, the student must complete all college application and enrollment forms and have parental/guardian consent. *Previous attendance history will be considered in this decision.*
Each student is responsible for dual enrollment tuition and textbooks.

Communications

- **Calendar** – The annual school calendar is available in the main office, in the back of this handbook, on RenWeb and online at www.cassatahs.org.
- **RenWeb** – This educational program is available to all parents who register in the office. Parents and students may access grades by logging onto RenWeb. You may go to the Cassata website and click on the “RenWeb” link on the home page and follow the prompts. Please call the office for questions regarding the use of RenWeb. The student’s teacher should be contacted if there is a question regarding a grade. Always keep the office informed of address/phone changes.
- **Progress Reports** – Progress reports are emailed to parents every six weeks. Included is information regarding academic achievement, behavior, attendance and punctuality.
- **Parent Conferences** – The office schedules parent/student/teacher conferences, **which are required**, once each semester. **The student must be present for all conferences.** Students not attending the conference with their parents or guardians are counted absent for the day. Parents are encouraged to schedule a conference at any time for concerns regarding progress or behavior. An appointment must be made for a conference scheduled before or after school. Other conferences will be set on an as-needed basis. Parents are encouraged to e-mail, sign-up on RenWeb or call to check on their student’s performance and progress.

School Supplies

Textbooks and computers are furnished, but students must supply pencils, pens, paper, and calculator when necessary. Students should plan ahead to be certain they bring all appropriate materials. If pens, pencils, paper, erasers and folders are needed, there are small quantities that can be purchased from the front office.

Respect for CCHS Faculty & Staff

Students, parents, guardians or any person advocating for a student enrolled at Cassata Catholic High School must exhibit appropriate respect for the faculty and staff. Physical or verbal abuse, slanderous comments, or any other vicious behavior or threats will be cause for the student to immediately be withdrawn from the school. **The student may be withdrawn for the behavior of a parent, guardian, grandparent, or other person advocating for the student.** It is CCHS’s hope that all persons act responsibly to prevent inappropriate behavior.

School Telephones

Use of school phones by students is limited to emergency calls only. All transportation arrangements must be made prior to arriving at school. **Please plan ahead!**



Weather Closing

Communication will be sent to students, parents, and guardians via email, text messages, and/or phone message. The Administration will make the decision as early as possible and the time of closing will be posted.

Fire, Tornado, and Lockdown Drills

Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills are scheduled periodically to ensure the safety of students and staff in the event of such emergencies.

Health Information

- **Health Records** – Students under 20 years of age must submit immunization records prior to admission.
- **Infectious Disease** – **Parents are asked to immediately notify the school if a student contracts an infectious disease or condition.**
- **Accident or Illness** – In the event of an accident or illness, parents will be notified. It is essential that parents have several current emergency telephone numbers on file. If in the opinion of the administration a student is in need of immediate medical attention and the parents cannot be contacted, the student will be taken to the hospital, but not at the expense of the school. The school does not carry accident insurance covering students. Parental insurance policies cover injuries that occur at school.
- **Medication** – See policy on page 17.

Official School Documents (Diocesan Policy 5289)

Diplomas, transcripts, school records, and any other official documents of the school (“official school documents”) shall be issued in conformity with the student’s God-given biological sex. Official school documents are also historical documents and, as such, must accurately reflect the name and identity of the alumnus/alumna during the time in which he/she was enrolled at and graduated from the school. If after graduation an alumnus/alumna legally changes his/her name, for whatever reason, and requests new versions of his/her official school documents, the official school documents may be issued in the following format: “Original Name, n/k/a. New Legal Name.”

TEA/VOE Forms

In order to issue a TEA/VOE form to a student for a driver’s license or driver’s education classes, the student must meet all state requirements. This includes the 90% attendance requirement, up-to-date tuition payments, and the student must be in good standing. This is a state law. CCHS will not break this law.

GED students must have continuous enrollment for a minimum of 45 days and high school students must have continuous enrollment for a minimum of 80 days.

Awarding Credit

Credit will be awarded when a student has met the designated requirements with a minimum course grade of 70%.

Students are expected to show mastery of the course content. They may be required to remediate and re-test until the teacher believes the student has mastered the necessary skills. A student may not skip assignments or chapters without the expressed consent of the teacher and administration. Additionally, students must turn work in as it is completed and not "hold" work until a chapter is completed to turn in all at once. **Test completion must occur as required in course syllabi. The teacher will not accept**

work from later chapters until all required quizzes or tests have been passed. For example, a student may not complete the work for Chapter 2 until Chapter 1 is complete and the test passed. The same policy holds true for each chapter in each class.

Those who have failed a course prior to enrolling in Cassata **may** be eligible to take chapter tests or a final exam and earn credit by demonstrating mastery in the subject area. The administration along with the teacher will determine a student’s eligibility to take a mastery test. **Students testing out of a course must complete the testing process within two weeks of enrollment in the class. Once enrolled in a course, a student must complete the course within 6 weeks (9 weeks for Math or Chemistry courses). An extension may be granted by the administration with a deduction assessed to the students’ average for the course.**

<u>Grading Scale</u>	<u>Credit Classification:</u>	<u>Endorsement 26</u>	<u>Foundation 22</u>
90 to 100 = A	Freshman	0 – 6.0	0 – 5.5
80 to 89 = B	Sophomore	6.5 – 12.0	6.0 – 11.0
70 to 79 = C	Junior	12.5 – 18	11.5 – 16.5
	Senior	18.5 – 26	17.0 – 22

*Valedictorians must graduate under the endorsement diploma (26-credit plan) and have spent at least one year at CCHS. Salutatorian can either be on the 22-credit or the 26-credit plan.

Credit for Work Experience

- A student must be enrolled at Cassata Catholic High School three months before work credit may be certified.
- Attendance must be 90% or above and satisfactory academic standing in all classes must be maintained.
- Additional one-half credits may be earned for every 175 hours of satisfactory performance with a single employer.
- Work experience hours may be used for physical education credit. Ninety hours are required for each half credit for physical education.

Homework

An average of one hour of homework per course is expected of all Cassata students. It is the responsibility of the student to ask the teacher what to do and how much is expected daily until the student becomes responsible enough to estimate that on his or her own. **The teacher is expected to check homework at the beginning of each class. If the student has not done the assigned homework a week in a row, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian. If homework is still not done, the teacher will set up a parent conference to address the problem.** An administrator will be available for the conference.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance and Academic Success go hand in hand. Students are expected to attend school **every day.** **If attendance falls below 90%, a student is classified as on probation.** Parents will be notified and conferences may be required. Students may not exceed (6) absences per course. Extenuating circumstances will be evaluated by an Administrator.

A requirement for receiving tuition assistance is meeting or exceeding the attendance requirement of 90%. **If attendance or punctuality falls below that, the student is in jeopardy of losing tuition assistance.**



Students arriving to school late must sign in and obtain a pass before reporting to class. **A student is tardy if he/she is not in the classroom when the bell rings.** Parents may not accept responsibility for the student's tardiness and expect a waiver of this policy. The parent and student must make a commitment to promptness.

Students are allowed (2) unexcused tardies per month; once over the limit, the student will be charged \$5 for each unexcused late arrival. Tardy fees will be applied to the monthly tuition rate in FACTS.

Parents/Guardians must call the school office (817) 926-1745 as soon as possible if a student will be absent or tardy.

Students should arrange doctor and dental appointments **around their school schedule.** This should not be difficult in most cases due to the *half-day* school day. The student is required to bring a physician's statement to the attendance clerk if school time must be missed. A doctor's statement, that includes a release date, is required if the student misses three or more consecutive days. Chronic absenteeism and/or tardiness will be grounds for suspension, expulsion and/or revocation of tuition assistance.

Safety Policy

Threats

Due to an increase in violent acts in schools nationwide, threats of any kind made to students, faculty and/or staff **MUST** be taken seriously. Threats of violence in any form (including social media) will result in suspension, expulsion, counseling, and other activities geared to enlighten the student to the severity of the issue. Students are advised not to "joke" about threats whether they are implied or direct.

Student Searches

The school is not required to meet the same standards as law enforcement regarding student searches. Student searches will only be conducted by the Principal or a school administrator. A search will generally take place only if reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will result in evidence proving the student has violated or is violating the law or the rules of the school. Cassata reserves the right to search any and everything present on our campus. Cassata may also employ the service of drug and weapon detecting dogs that will arrive unannounced, to search the building, cars and property at Cassata. Parents will be notified immediately if any illegal items are found or suspected. This measure will be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of our students. (Please see also Substance Abuse Policy pg. 22)

Violence and Weapons Policy

Cassata provides a safe and productive environment for students and employees. As such, the school expressly prohibits any and all acts or threats of violence by or against any student, employee, and family member of a student, vendor, or other visitor to the school facilities. This policy applies to all students and employees, whether or not they are engaged in business on behalf of the school, and whether or not they are on school premises.

In addition, Cassata strictly prohibits the possession of, exhibiting or threatening to exhibit or to use, or use of any and all weapons or any item that may be used as a weapon, including handguns, on school premises by any student or employee, family member of a student, vendor, or other visitor, whether licensed or unlicensed and whether concealed or visible. School premises include not only the main facilities, but also the parking lots, entrances and exits, break areas, etc. Students and employees are further prohibited from the possession of, exhibiting or threatening to exhibit or to use, or the use of any and all weapons while conducting business on behalf of the school off of school premises. The above

also pertains to any persons on school sponsored trips.

Cassata is required to post signs containing the written statutory notice prohibiting bringing concealed weapons onto the school property.

It may be a felony to bring a weapon onto a school campus in the state of Texas. It is expressly forbidden for anyone to bring a weapon on the property of Cassata Catholic High School or on any school related activity regardless of one's ability to carry a concealed weapon in other areas.

Diocese of Ft. Worth Search Policy

Diocese/School Property

Desks, lockers, diocese/school-provided technology, and similar items are the property of the diocese/school and are provided for student use as a matter of convenience. Diocese/school property is subject to search or inspection at any time without notice. Students have no expectation of privacy in or on diocese/school property.

Students are responsible for any items they possess, or that are found in or on diocese/school property provided to them, that is prohibited by law, diocese/school policy, or the student code of conduct.

Searches in General

In the interest of promoting student safety and attempting to ensure that schools are safe and drug free, diocese/school officials may occasionally conduct searches. Diocese/school officials may conduct searches of students, their belongings, and their vehicles. Searches of students will be conducted without discrimination, based on, for example, reasonable suspicion, voluntary consent, or pursuant to diocese policy providing for random security search procedures, including with the use of metal detectors.

In accordance with the student code of conduct, students are responsible for prohibited items found in their possession or under their control, including items in their personal belongings or in vehicles parked on diocese/school property.

If, in the sole discretion of a diocese/school official, there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the student code of conduct, a diocese/school official may conduct a search in accordance with law and diocese/school regulations, including with the use of portable metal detectors.

Metal Detectors

To maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment, the diocese/school reserves the right to subject students to fixed or portable metal detector searches when entering a diocese/school campus and at off campus, school-sponsored activities, or if, in the sole discretion of a diocese/school official, there is reasonable suspicion to believe that searching a student's person, belongings, or vehicle will reveal evidence of a violation of the student code of conduct.

Trained Dogs

The diocese/school may contract with 3rd party security companies that use trained dogs and metal detectors to screen for concealed, prohibited items, including drugs and alcohol. Screenings conducted by trained dogs and metal detectors will not be announced in advance. Portable metal detectors can be used with students during random or reasonable belief searches by the contracted 3rd party security company. The dogs will not be used with students, but students may be asked to leave personal belongings in an area that is going to be screened, such as a classroom, a locker, or a vehicle. If a dog alerts to an item or an area, it may be searched by diocese/school officials.



Telecommunications and Other Electronic Devices

Use of diocese/school-owned equipment and its network systems is not private and will be monitored by the diocese/school.

Any searches of personal telecommunications or other personal electronic devices may be conducted in accordance with policy, and the device may be confiscated to perform such search. A confiscated device may be turned over to law enforcement to determine whether a crime has been committed.

Vehicles on Campus (Secondary Grade Levels Only)

A student has full responsibility for the security and content of his or her vehicle parked on Diocese/school property and must make certain that it is locked and that the keys are not given to others. Vehicles parked on diocese/school property are under the jurisdiction of the diocese/school. Diocese/school officials may search any vehicle any time they believe, in their sole discretion, that there is reasonable suspicion to do so, with or without the permission of the student. If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student will be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the student's parent will be contacted. If a search is also refused by the student's parent, the diocese/school may turn the matter over to law enforcement and the student may lose the privilege to drive on or park a vehicle on any diocese/school property. The diocese/school may, in certain circumstances, contact law enforcement even if permission to search is granted.

Bullying/Harassment/Violence and Human Sexuality (Diocesan Policy 5281)

All persons have inherent human dignity and are thus deserving of innate respect and love as a person. Bullying, harassment, or threats or acts of violence against any student based on that student's perceived sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity will not be tolerated (see above, sections 5290).

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual advances, conduct or language (verbalized directly in person and/or indirectly via social media), and is a form of sexual misconduct. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any student experiencing sexual harassment is required to report the offense immediately to school personnel. Counseling will be required of any student harassing another. Suspension and/or expulsion may also result from this type of harassment.

Sex Offenders

No individual, who is required to register as a sex offender under Chapter 62, Code of Criminal Procedure, or any other statute, may be a student. Any student, who is required to register as a sex offender, shall be expelled from the school.

Immunization Policy

Every student enrolled in a Catholic School in the State of Texas shall be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A student who fails to present the required evidence shall not be accepted for enrollment. The only exception to the foregoing requirement is a medical exemption signed by a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) authorized to practice in the State of Texas, including the physicians license number.

Immunizations are not in conflict with the Catholic faith. Conscience objections or waivers, which may be permissible for attendance in public schools, do not qualify as an exemption in Catholic Schools in Texas. (Texas Attorney General Opinion: GA-0420)

This policy was adopted by Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, December 2008 and voted on April 3, 2017 to keep as written with no changes by the Bishops of Texas.



Medication Policy

No medication, including aspirin, will be dispensed from the office. Under no circumstance may faculty or staff dispense or allow any form of medication to be taken by students. Parents are required to inform the school office of all medications the student is taking in case of an emergency.

Electronic Devices Policy

No personal electronic devices are allowed during school hours –8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Electronic devices include cell phones, smart watches, radios, iPods, Air Pods, headphones, etc. They must be left at home or in the vehicle (if a student drives to school). Should a student be found with an electronic device, it will be taken up and returned according to the rules below:

- First Offense – returned to student at the end of the day after parent contact
- Second Offense – returned at the end of the day after **\$30 fine*** and Parent/Guardian contact
- **Third Offense – returned at the end of the day after \$50 fine*, in-person meeting with parents**
 - **Every subsequent infraction - \$50 fine* and suspension**

Smoking/Vaping Policy

Students are not permitted to smoke, vape, or use tobacco products in any area of the school building, its property, or within a two-block radius of the school. Smoking and vaping on field trips is not allowed.

Solicitation

Other than by Cassata’s Student Council or other approved school group, selling of any kind is prohibited on CCHS campus and must be approved by the administration.

School Visitors

Student visitors are not allowed during the school day, on field trips, or other scheduled school functions. Parents are always welcome to visit the school. Parents needing to see a specific teacher or staff member are expected to call and make an appointment so that adequate time may be scheduled.

All Visitors must check-in through the school office.

Field Trips

Occasional field trips are scheduled to correlate with units of study or to enhance cultural awareness. Transportation will be arranged through the administrative office only. A written permission slip must be on file at the school prior to the student leaving for the event.

Field trips are a privilege. Students who fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements may be denied the privilege to participate. Students must be in dress code unless directed otherwise and then must follow the rules for dress day as required by the instructor.

Only those students who have submitted a parental permission form prior to leaving will be allowed to go on a field trip. Phone calls may not be substituted for written permission. Student visitors are not allowed on field trips. Students are reminded that they are representing Cassata and are expected to conduct themselves appropriately and to follow all school rules while on field trips.

Responsibility for School Property

The student to whom book(s) are issued must pay for damaged or lost textbooks. Students are also financially responsible for any damage they cause to school property and equipment.

Internet/Technology Policy

The use of the Internet is limited to sites of educational relevance and appropriateness. Chat rooms, adult rooms with inappropriate adult content and sites providing illegal, illicit or terrorist information or



materials are restricted. Further, sites which promote hate of any group of people will not be tolerated, nor will sites with language not appropriate for the classroom. It is never appropriate to look at sites that teach how to make drugs or weapons.

When in doubt about visiting a site, consult your teacher. Students breaking this rule are subject to suspension from computer use, and suspension or expulsion from school. Prior to using any Cassata computer, an Internet Policy Form must be signed by the parent/guardian and student.

Dress Code (Diocesan Policy 5290)

Students must dress appropriately in accordance with their God-given biological sex while on campus, at all school functions, and while representing the school at outside functions.

Cassata Dress Code requirements specifications are as follows:

- Any color polo shirts (long or short sleeve);
- Khaki pants or jeans black or blue (no rips and holes; no shorts);
- Khaki skirts for girls - knee length;
- Outerwear – zip-ups or button-downs with no logos; solid color sweatshirts with no logos (college/city/state logos permitted); **NO HOODIES**
- Footwear – lace-up shoes or boots (no flip-flops, slip-ons, crocs, sandals, high heels)
- No head covers of any kind

Please note that all clothing must be clean and no clothing item may have any logos and language promoting drugs, guns, alcohol, tobacco, or violence.

Students must be in full compliance with the dress code at all times that the student is on school property and on school sponsored activities. **Students who come to school out of dress code will be charged \$5 for each time they are out of dress code. The fee will be added to the monthly tuition payment.**

***Students who are regularly in violation of Cassata Dress Code are in danger of losing tuition assistance or other disciplinary action.**

Honor Code and Cheating

All academic work must be completed by the student. Cheating on daily work or a test will be punished as follows:

First Offense – Conference with a parent or guardian; course work is destroyed and the student may be suspended from the course. An assignment regarding honesty will be required prior to being allowed to restart the course.

Second Offense – Conference with parent or guardian; course work is destroyed, and the student is suspended from Cassata Catholic High School for *up to nine weeks*.

Definition of Cheating

At Cassata Catholic High School, cheating is defined as turning in work that you did not compose or complete yourself, whether it comes from a fellow student, parent, friend, *Cliff Notes*, the Internet, the back of a textbook or a teacher's edition. Having someone else write answers for you is considered cheating. Letting someone else copy your work as his or her own is also cheating. Plagiarism is cheating.

Cheating is further defined as using notes or other aids during a test without a teacher's direct approval. Participating in teacher-approved study groups is not considered cheating. Cheating occurs when you work together and get your answers from someone else or when you give your answers to someone else

without your teacher's approval or knowledge. Partnering with another student to divide the work is also cheating. If student A answers questions 1-10 and student B answers 11-20 and exchange answers, it is cheating.

Food/Beverages

Food and drink (except for bottled water) are not permitted in the classroom. Cassata does have a Student Lounge where eating and drinking are allowed. There are some areas of the school that food and drink cannot be brought to at all.

Student Lockers

Student lockers and locks are available to any student wishing to use one on a first-come, first-serve basis. Locker fee is \$5 per semester. Student can only use the locker assigned to them and are responsible for keeping it clean and orderly. Food may not be left in lockers overnight. Any damage to the locker or combination lock in any way will be the student's responsibility. The locker's appearance may never be altered in any way (no stickers, decals, etc.). Students are not to keep misappropriated materials and/or prohibited items in the lockers. Cassata reserves the right to search student lockers at any time.

Rules for Student Conduct

Cassata Catholic High School requires standards of conduct that will create an environment conducive to learning and an atmosphere of respect. A primary goal is to help each student develop self-discipline and responsibility for proper behavior. Classroom rules will be posted in each classroom. **You will be treated as an adult and are expected to conduct yourself as an adult. In return, we expect the same.**

Classroom Rules

- Be seated with materials ready when the bell sounds
- Stay on task (no sleeping)
- Do not disturb others
- Request permission and a pass to leave the classroom
- Keep classroom clean and organized
- Teacher-specific rules which are given to the student on the first day of class

School Rules

- Respect staff, other students and yourself
- Establish personal goals and work to achieve them
- Attend regularly and punctually
- Do not smoke or vape in the building or around the campus within two blocks of the school
- Do not leave school or go outside without permission
- Follow the dress code
- Theft or damage to property will require restitution
- Inappropriate language, including cursing or "gang" terminology is not acceptable
- Sexual, Violent and/or threatening behavior is never allowed
- Come inside the building as soon as you arrive

Students who receive at least three write-ups for repetitive behavior violations within one calendar month will be subject to suspension. Please note the absence of the student's corrective action for the applicable behavior infraction may lead to alternative disciplinary measures, including expulsion.



Public Displays of Affection & Chastity (Diocesan Policy 5283)

All persons are called to chastity in accordance with their state in life. For purposes of the school environment, chastity also encompasses modesty in language, appearance, dress, and behavior. Accordingly, romantic or sexual displays of affection are in principle not permitted at school. Public displays of affection at school or school functions is subject to disciplinary action.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

Students at Cassata Catholic High School have the right:

- To be treated with dignity and respect,
- To have a positive learning environment,
- To express themselves in a reasonable manner.

It is the responsibility of Cassata Catholic High School students:

- To respect self, others, and property,
- To set personal goals and work toward achieving them,
- To attend school regularly, to be on time, and to bring the required materials,
- To follow school and classroom rules,
- To complete daily assignments,
- To inform the office of any changes in address, phone, etc...

Probation Contracts and Discipline Code

Students enrolling at Cassata may be required to sign a 4-week probationary behavior contract and a 6-week probationary academic contract. Students who are in violation of either of the said contracts may be withdrawn. Likewise, students may be withdrawn if the needs of the student are not being met or the student's needs are greater than Cassata can provide.

Probationary contracts are signed by the student, a parent, and an administrator. Every effort is made to assist the student in succeeding at Cassata.

Cassata students are provided every opportunity to achieve scholastic success, but those who disregard school rules will be subject to disciplinary action. The following non-exhaustive list of actions may result in suspension or expulsion:

- Possession, use, or sale of alcohol, drugs, or prohibited substances or substances represented as illegal. This includes any controlled substance as defined by law, regardless of the amount.
- Possession or use of a weapon or any item that may be used as a weapon.
- Fighting, physical aggression, threatening behavior or words (in person or via social media), or disrespect toward students or staff.
- Damaging property or stealing.
- Habitual misconduct which is disruptive to the learning process.
- Violation of the honor code.
- Refusal to obey reasonable directives of faculty and staff.
- Chronic absenteeism or tardiness.
- Continued refusal or inability to complete school work.
- Refusing to go to the school office when directed.
- All illegal acts and/or threats.
- Any language or representation of hate toward a group or individual.
- Cyberbullying



- Other inappropriate conduct by a student or one acting on the behalf of a student.

A school administrator will notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the reason for the suspension, the duration of the suspension, and the requirements for reinstatement.

Parents wishing to appeal an expulsion decision must file a written appeal with the administration within three (3) days from the date of the parent's notification of the administration's decision.

Substance Abuse (Diocesan Policy 5315)

As a Catholic school, our faith calls us to treasure our dignity as human beings. We are also a family community and our concern for the health, safety, and welfare of our students and families is paramount. It is important that our students' welfare be continuously protected -- including after the school day ends, on weekends, and throughout the year. The use of illegal substances by students damages their spiritual well-being, performance, and development. Rooted in our concern for the welfare of our students and families, this substance abuse policy supports our mission of seeking truth, developing personal responsibility, and encouraging the full use of the gifts God gives to each developing young person.

Students are expected to avoid the use of tobacco products, consumption of alcohol, and use of drugs. The use of tobacco, alcohol, and other illegal substances negatively affects the growth of young people, subjects students and parents to potential criminal and legal jeopardy, harms student health, disrupts the educational process, endangers others, and negatively affects the reputation of the school community. To be successful, this policy requires the support of the entire school community, which includes students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration sharing in a spirit of cooperation, honesty, accountability, and responsibility.

IMPLEMENTATION

A student who possesses, uses, distributes, or exercises custody or control over alcohol, drugs (including controlled substances), or drug paraphernalia, whether on or off campus, may face disciplinary action, including but not limited to losing the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities or athletic programs, probation, suspension, or expulsion from school. In addition, the student may be required to submit to a random drug test (or ongoing random drug testing) or undergo a drug/alcohol screening and assessment at an agency approved by the School, at the expense of the student or the student's parent/guardian. Parents/guardians must sign a release of information consent form so that results of the assessment can be shared with the School. School administration must receive the assessment and recommendations from the agency. If requested by the School, the student must agree to follow a treatment plan.

A student suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, including while at school or at a school-related event, may be required to submit to a school-approved drug test or breathalyzer test. If the test returns a positive result, disciplinary action will be taken. A student who refuses to submit to a drug test or breathalyzer test when requested by the School will be deemed to have given a positive test result or be under the influence, and disciplinary action will be taken.

Students do not have an expectation of privacy in any property or items brought onto School premises or to school-related events. The School reserves the right to search lockers, coats, bags, automobiles, and other personal belongings of students at the School or at school-related events. Students who do not cooperate with the search or search request will be subject to disciplinary action.

The refusal of the student, or a parent/guardian of the student, to comply with this policy or submit to the School's requirements or requests will result in disciplinary action, which may include losing the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities or athletic programs, probation, suspension, or expulsion from school.

Grievance Policy

Specific policy for grievances and complaints are available from the school office. Before filing an official grievance, however, the parent and student must first speak to the person with whom the student is experiencing the problem. If the problem is not resolved, please contact the administration who will set up a conference to resolve the grievance. The administration has full discretion in resolving all grievances for the school

COVID-19 Policy

In order to prevent the spread of disease, we ask that you do not send your child to school if he/she is exhibiting any symptoms of illness or running a fever. If he/she has been ill, it is required that he/she be free of fever without fever reducing medication for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

With respect to the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that parents//guardians follow this protocol at all times. Should a child become ill on campus and require a parent/guardian to take them home, this parent/guardian must arrive to retrieve the student within 30 minutes of the initial phone call.

Human Sexuality (Diocesan Policy 5280)

Reasons for a Policy on Human Sexuality

As the Congregation for Catholic Education noted in its 2019 instruction entitled “*Male and Female He Created Them*” *Towards a Path of Dialogue on the Question of Gender Theory in Education*, “It is becoming increasingly clear that we are now facing with what might accurately be called an *educational crisis*, especially in the field of affectivity and sexuality” (*Male and Female*, #1). It expounded upon the scope of the crisis stemming from an emerging radical view of human sexuality, noting:

The context in which the mission of education is carried out is characterized by challenges emerging from varying forms of an ideology that is given the general name ‘gender theory’, which “denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences, thereby eliminating the anthropological basis of the family. This ideology leads to educational programmes and legislative enactments that promote a personal identity and emotional intimacy radically separated from the biological difference between male and female. Consequently, human identity becomes the choice of the individual, one which can also change over time.” (*Male and Female*, #2) (internal citation omitted)

Our dignity and creation in the image and likeness of God, Christian anthropology, a proper understanding of human sexuality, and the essential importance of our sexuality and sexual identity as assigned by God are authoritatively and definitively revealed in Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Catholic Church. (see *Genesis 1:27*; see *Male and Female*; see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (“CCC”), #355-373, 2331-2372). As all entities of the Catholic Church are for the purpose of furthering the saving mission of Jesus Christ, they must operate in accord with the truth revealed by God in both natural law and divine revelation. In particular, our Catholic schools must remain in the fullness of the truth and charity in order to carry out their proper mission:

Since true education must strive for complete formation of the human person that looks to his or her final end as well as to the common good of societies, children and youth are to be nurtured in such a way that they are able to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual talents harmoniously, acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and right use of freedom, and are formed to participate actively in social life. (*Code of Canon Law*, c. 795)

These truths extend into every facet of our lives, including – and perhaps especially – our sexuality.



Regarding sexuality and sexual identity, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: “By creating the human being man and woman, God gives personal dignity equally to the one and the other. Each of them, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity.” (CCC, #2393). By its very nature, sexuality is ordered to the conjugal love of a man and woman within the bond of marriage (c. 1055). And marriage, which is a partnership of the whole of life, is always ordered by its very nature to both the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children (*Ibid.*). All persons are called to chastity, to be lived out according to one’s state in life (CCC, #2337-2359).

These teachings of the Church are not mere antiquated notions. In fact, Pope Francis has repeatedly stressed the importance of a proper understanding of our sexuality, warning of the challenge posed by “the various forms of an ideology of gender that denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences (*Amoris Laetitia* (“AL”), #56). Pope Francis further notes that “biological sex and the sociocultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated,” and that although we must always be “understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life,” that does not require us to “accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality” (*Ibid.*). Ultimately, “[w]e are creatures, and not omnipotent,” and we must accept and respect our humanity “as it was created” (*Ibid.*; see also Gen. 1:27, Matthew 19:4, and Mark 10:6). Pope Francis then stresses that “the young need to be helped to accept their own body as it was created,” so that “we can joyfully accept the specific gifts of another man or woman, the work of God the Creator” (AL, #285).

As Pope Francis notes, we must always respect the sacred dignity of each individual person, which means that the Church cannot and must not accept the confused notions of gender ideology. We must not demean or deny the sincerity and struggle of those who experience same-sex attraction or who feel their true gender identity is different from their biological sex. Rather, we seek to accompany and to lead them on their journey of life, offering them the light of the Gospel as they try to find their way forward. These truths are not merely faith-based; rather, such realities are also knowable through the use of properly functioning senses and right reason (Pope St. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, #22). We do not serve anyone’s greater good by denying or falsifying the truth, for it is only the truth that frees us for the full life that God offers to each of us. Thus, when a person experiences either same-sex attraction or some form of gender dysphoria, such struggles do not change the biological fact of how God immutably created that person, and it would be untruthful for the Catholic Church or our Catholic schools to pretend otherwise. To pretend otherwise would contradict sound scientific evidence, reason, the nature of the human person, and key tenets of the Catholic faith (see National Catholic Bioethics Center, *Brief Statement on Transgenderism*). Therefore, the policies of our Catholic schools must respectfully uphold these fundamental truths.

Sexual Orientation and Same-Sex Attraction (Diocesan Policy 5283)

Students may not advocate, celebrate, or express same-sex attraction in such a way that is contrary to the authentic teachings of the Catholic faith, or that causes confusion, disruption, or distraction in the context of Catholic school classes, activities, or events. When discussing homosexuality or homosexual inclinations, the use of the term “same-sex attraction” is preferred, as it is a more appropriate description in accordance with the truths of Catholic faith and morals.

Gender Dysphoria (Transgenderism) (Diocesan Policy 5284)

Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual *identity*. (CCC, #2333)

By creating the human being man and woman, God gives personal dignity equally to the one and the other. Each of them, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity. (CCC, #2393)

All students are expected to conduct themselves at school, at all school functions, and while representing the school at outside functions in a manner consistent with their biological sex as given to them by God.

All students are to avoid behaviors associated with the attempt to redefine their God-given sex. Schools shall consider the gender of all students as being consistent with their God-given biological sex for all purposes, including, but not limited to, the following: eligibility for and participation in school athletics and single-sex curricular and extracurricular activities; school-sponsored dances; dress and uniform policies; the use of changing facilities, showers, locker rooms, and bathrooms; titles, names, and pronouns; and official school documents. If a student's expression of gender, sexual identity, or sexuality should be in conflict with the teachings of the Catholic faith, cause confusion or disruption at the school, mislead others, cause scandal, or have the potential for causing scandal, then the matter will first be discussed with the student and a parent or guardian of the student. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the school, whose primary goal must always be to uphold and to teach Catholic truths, principles, and doctrine, then the student may be dismissed from the school, after the parent/guardian is first given the opportunity to withdraw the student from the school. If a student is dismissed from the school under this policy, then the school will refund the unused portion of prepaid tuition on a pro rata basis.

Athletics & Other Extra Curriculars (Diocesan Policy 5285)

Eligibility for athletics and single-sex curricular/extracurricular activities is based upon the God-given biological sex of the student.

Facilities Use (Diocesan Policy 5286)

Utilization by faculty, staff, students, or any visitors of school facilities, including but not limited to locker rooms, showers, restrooms, and overnight accommodations, will align with the person's God-given biological sex. School facilities are dedicated to the mission of Catholic education and may not be used by any member of the school community or any external organization or individual for any purpose or cause that is contrary to Catholic teaching or otherwise opposed to the Catholic Church.

Formal Titles and Names (Diocesan Policy 5287)

School personnel will address students by the name listed on the official school registration (or its common derivative) and the pronouns correlating to their God-given biological sex.

Mission Integrity (Diocesan Policy 5288)

Schools are to exercise their responsibility to teach Catholic faith and morals in the fullness of truth and charity, especially as expressed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. As such, pastors, catechists, and other ministers of the faith (i.e., teachers, counselors, coaches, and school administrators) are called to meet people where they are to accompany and guide them to the Truth of the Catholic Faith.

Parents/guardians and non-Catholics whose religious practices or beliefs run counter to Catholic teaching might experience possible conflicts as mission integrity is maintained. Sincere questioning of the practices or teachings of the Catholic faith in order to more deeply understand them are acceptable and welcomed if done respectfully; however, hostile, disrespectful, or defiant challenge of Catholic practice or teaching, or the living of a lifestyle, engaging in other conduct, or advocacy of a matter that is contrary to Catholic practice or teaching, are signs that a student, parent, staff, or faculty member may not be a fit for the school's primary evangelical mission and may be denied admission or dismissed therefor.



PARENTS & GUARDIANS

Parents'/Guardians' Role in Education

A strong, cooperative partnership between home and school is an essential ingredient in effective education.

- The best interests and needs of the student remain paramount, yet must be balanced against the good of the entire community.
- With all partners in the process working together, the student is afforded the best possible educational experience.

The academic and spiritual development of the students holds the primary position in relation to all other school programs and activities.

- Parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators can expect to be treated with respect at all times and to have access to conferences at mutually convenient times when concerns arise.
- **Parents who have a concern should first contact the teacher directly.** If a satisfactory solution is not reached, then a conference with parents, teacher, and principal will be scheduled.
- The student will be involved in most conferences and problem-solving decisions. This will enable the student to take ownership of his/her education and choices.
- A diocesan grievance policy is available to parents if a satisfactory resolution is not achieved. The first step requires that within ten days following the event, a written grievance must be submitted to the Principal.

Agreement

Families are asked to sign the Handbook Acknowledgment form to indicate their partnership with the school.

Collectively and individually we, the members of Cassata Catholic High School community, agree to abide by this Agreement to ensure that our school is conducted in a respectful manner, and in a way that will generate respect and credibility for our school and community.

- We will conduct ourselves in a professional and civil manner at all times as representatives of Cassata Catholic High School Community. If we find ourselves in disagreement with the Administration or Faculty, or if we have a school-related concern, we will discuss the matter with the appropriate school personnel involved rather than speaking negativity about the school within the community.
- We will treat each person with respect at all times, regardless of an individual's opinion, or differences.
- Even in the face of disagreement or differences of opinion, we will demonstrate respect for others. We will commit to good faith efforts to resolve any grievances. We will agree to disagree without being disrespectful.
- Under no circumstances during meetings, functions, or events will we engage in, or threaten to engage in, any verbal or physical attack on any other individual. This includes using any type of social media (i.e. Facebook, X, Texting, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok etc.) as a means of conveying threats (insinuated or direct) or disparaging remarks against community members, faculty, staff, and/or administration.



- We will communicate honestly and respectfully with the school personnel, even when upset, to resolve disputes or relay concern in a timely manner.
- We will commit to communicate our ideas and points of view clearly, and allow others to do the same without interruption and with active listening.
- We will not use language that is abusive, threatening, obscene, or slanderous, including using profanities, insults, or other disrespectful remarks or gestures. Any type of derogatory language about an individual's ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religion will never be tolerated.
- We will refrain from using, or being under the influence of any mind-altering substance (i.e. drugs, alcohol, etc.) when in attendance at any school-sponsored function (both on-campus and off-campus) or when students are present.
- We commit to learning the applicable procedures, policies, and rules that govern Cassata Catholic High School, and will not knowingly violate any of these procedures, policies, and rules. We will abide by these procedures, policies, and rules in order to create a safe and effective environment at all times.
- At moments when individuals become disruptive and violate this Agreement that we have pledged to follow, we will work to encourage that the person conducts him/herself in a respectful and orderly manner.
- We will seek to present information truthfully, and will not knowingly misrepresent, mischaracterize, or misquote information received from others.
- We will take full responsibility for all visitors who we bring on to the campus or to events and functions.
- We will take full responsibility for our own actions and subsequent consequences.
- We will continue to teach our children Christ-like behavior to prevent the hurtful consequences of bullying, teasing, and intimidating behavior towards others.

If someone is found to be in violation of this policy, depending on the severity of the violation, the school administration reserves the right to address the issue in the following manner:

1. In a conference, the Administration will review the violations and give a written warning about possible consequences that may occur if further violation is witnessed.
2. If another violation is committed, the Administration will enact a necessary and appropriate consequence up to and including being restricted from attendance at school functions or events for a period of time.
3. If the individual's behavior continues to be deemed a problem or if he/she violates that restriction, the administration will enact a necessary and appropriate consequence up to and including dismissal from the school community.
4. If the violation is severe and/or public, the Administration reserves the right to dismiss the student and family upon the first infraction.



All members of our community [parents, guardians, visitors, faculty, and staff] will be held to the same standards. While the Agreement violations are usually held in the strictest confidence, some Agreement violations may be so public or significant that the Administration (in consultation with the Superintendent) may need to inform the school community.

Any questions regarding such policies or procedures should be directed to the Administration as deemed appropriate.

I understand the education of my child is a collaborative effort involving my child, myself, and the faculty and administration of Cassata Catholic High School. I further understand that my child's teachers are dedicated professionals who make sacrifices to teach in a Catholic School.

I can expect from the school:

- to collaborate and communicate with parents/guardians while providing a comprehensive educational experience for my child.
- to uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church, share the faith with enthusiasm and pastoral care, and be worthy role models.
- to provide an excellent academic program and a safe, positive environment.
- to respond to concerns in a professional and timely manner, while protecting the child's and family's confidentiality.
- to be good stewards of the resources provided by the school.

In order to demonstrate fully my commitment, full support and cooperation with Cassata Catholic High School, I will:

- agree to the school's expectations concerning dress code, behavior, attendance, respect for others, and use of technology as outlined in the Student Handbook.
- expect my child to use respectful verbal and body language, and model respect by refusing to start rumors or listen to gossip.
- understand that all students and parents are responsible for the good name of the school, knowing that behavior outside of school that is non-exemplary or harmful to the school's good reputation may lead to disciplinary action at school.
- provide my student with assistance and support needed for academic and social success, and hold my student responsible for his/her own choices and behavior
- ensure that my student does homework daily after or before school and adheres to his/her course completion dates for each course.
- provide Cassata with correct contact information (phone number, email) to that I may be easily reached in case of an emergency
- respond to any communication from the school (faculty, staff, and/or administration) in a timely manner – within 24 hours; as soon as possible in emergent situations.
- attend all required Student/Parent/Teacher conferences; if I am unable to attend, I will inform the school office as soon as possible and reschedule the meeting.
- honor my financial obligations to the school through timely tuition payments.

Parent/Guardian signature on the Handbook Acknowledgment form signifies an endorsement of the school's policy as outlined in the Student/Parent Handbook, and a pledge to uphold and encourage the student's compliance.



Parent Cooperation

In keeping with the Christian nature of the school, the very highest standards of conduct and courtesy are expected at all times, not only of the students, but also of the parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are expected to treat all school employees and volunteers with courtesy and respect, to support the authority of the school employees and volunteers, and to cooperate in good faith with the implementation and enforcement of all policies and procedures set forth in the Handbook. In accordance with Diocesan policy, continued admission will be denied to those students whose parents fail to follow school policies and regulations, to cooperate with the staff, or interfere in matters of school administration or discipline so that the school's ability to serve any student is affected.

Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences for all students are scheduled once every semester and as needed throughout the school year. Parents/guardians and teachers work together for the betterment of the student.

- Communication with parents/guardians will be made when a serious or consistent problem arises.
- Teachers or parents/guardians may request additional conferences.
- Parents/guardians may schedule a conference with a teacher by calling the School Office to leave a message for the teacher or by emailing the teacher directly.
- **Parents are asked never to call or email their teachers at their homes.**
- Administrators may choose to attend any Parent/Teacher conferences.
- In the best interest of the student, it is the school's policy to schedule only one conference time that both parents may attend.
- Custodial parents are responsible for sharing the report card, communicating information on school events, and notifying the non-custodial parent of conference times.

Instructional Support

- Cassata is committed to providing an appropriate educational setting for all students who desire to attend, insofar as this is possible. The administration, along with the Diocesan Learning Specialist and the Cassata Catholic High School Administration, will assist classroom teachers in meeting students' individual needs as necessary.
- Learning differences may appear as problems related to behavior, reading, writing, spelling, or math. They can occur singularly or in clusters and are not related to intelligence. Any and all written reports obtained by parents regarding a student's academic, emotional, or behavioral issues **must** be provided to the school.
- The school administration may request specialized testing to diagnose or determine learning or psychological differences and will inform parents of appropriate procedures in the event such testing is indicated at the parent's expense.
- After reviewing the results, the school will make every effort to provide special accommodations suitable for the student based on the recommendations.
- If parents do not seek the necessary assistance or if the most appropriate environment cannot be provided, the school administration may decide that the student's educational needs cannot be met at Cassata Catholic High School.
- If a teacher believes that a student is not mastering the basic curriculum in any area, the administration may recommend that the student undergo educational testing to determine whether the student needs additional instructional support. Generally, teachers receive only introductory training regarding these diagnoses. Therefore, assessments and recommendations must be given by an educational psychologist or other appropriate medical professional.



- Parents are notified if the school recommends educational testing. All school recommendations, reports, grades or teacher surveys will be mailed directly to the testing facility; parents/guardians must include the address of the tester or the facility on the request form.
- If the school had not recommended educational testing but parents/guardians desire for the school to provide instructional support for their child, the parents must first contact the administration and follow the school's procedures for educational testing.
- In order for the school to consider providing additional instructional support to any student, the above guidelines must be followed and a complete diagnostic report, including complete test scores, must be submitted to the school office. The school will then evaluate the test results to determine what, if any, additional instructional support may be provided to the student.
- If additional instructional support is recommended by the diagnostic report and is offered by Cassata, the student's parents/guardians must sign a permission form before the student is given the recommended support. If the parents/guardians do not want the student to receive the recommended support, they must sign a waiver form stating so. However, the student is still expected to fulfill the same requirements as the other students in the grade.

Extra Set of Books

Only students who have testing that demonstrates a specific physical need on file at the school may be provided with an extra set of books to be kept at home. Students requesting an extra set of books should contact the school administration. Extra books issued require care and are subject to the same repair/replacement charges as the other student texts.

NOTICE: This handbook does not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student/parent, or faculty/staff member and the school or Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth. The school reserves the right to change, alter, amend, discontinue, abolish, or depart from this handbook or any of the policies, rules, regulations, standards of conduct, protocols, services, programs, or activities within it at any time, without notice, at its discretion. The school provides the information herein solely for the convenience of the reader and, to the extent permissible by law, expressly disclaims any liability, which may otherwise be incurred.



President
 Dr. Maggie Harrison
Exec. Asst. to the President
 Cserdis Anderson
Assistant Principal
 Julianna McConegry
Counselor
 Elizabeth Hamilton

2023-2024 School Calendar

1400 Hemphill Street, Fort Worth, TX 76104-4703
 Phone (817) 926-1745 Fax (817) 926-3132
 Website: www.cassatahs.org



August 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

September 2023

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October 2023

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29	30	31				

November 2023

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December 2023

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31						

January 2024

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February 2024

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25	26	27	28	29		

March 2024

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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April 2024

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28	29	30				

May 2024

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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	*28*	*29*	30	31	

Important Dates & Holidays

Teacher In-service	August 1-11
First Day of School	August 15
Early Dismissal	September 1
Labor Day	September 4
Afternoon Start	October 11
P/S/T Teacher Conferences	October 20
Early Dismissal	November 17
Thanksgiving Holidays	November 20-24
Last Day for Senior Work	December 8
Fall Graduation	December 16
Early Dismissal	December 21
Christmas Holiday Break	Dec. 22 - Jan. 5
Martin Luther King Day	January 15
Early Dismissal	January 26
Afternoon Start	February 19
P/S/T Teacher Conferences	February 23
Early Dismissal	March 8
Spring Break	March 11-15
Early Dismissal	March 28
Good Friday	March 29
Afternoon Start	April 1
Afternoon Start	April 24
Last Day for Senior Work	May 9
Spring Graduation	May 18
Last Day of Classes	May 24
Memorial Day	May 27
Snow Day (Tentative)	May 28 & 29

- First/Last Day of School
 - Monthly Diocesan In-service Day ***New***
 - Teacher In-service Day
 - Parent/Student/Teacher Conference
 - School Holiday (Campus Closed)
 - Snow Day
 - Graduation
 - Last Day for Seniors to turn in work
- *Early Dismissals & Afternoon Starts are listed in bold***

SCHOOL HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT
Diocese of Fort Worth – Catholic Schools

School: _____ School Year: _____

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Optional: Use the lines below to include other children instead of filling out a separate form

<i>Print Student's Name and Grade Level</i>	<i>Print Student's Name and Grade Level</i>
<i>Print Student's Name and Grade Level</i>	<i>Print Student's Name and Grade Level</i>

Mother's Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The registration and attendance of a student at the School constitutes an expressed agreement on the part of the student, as well as the student's parents/guardians, to comply with the School's Handbook, policies, and procedures and to demonstrate a commitment to the School's mission.

I, the undersigned parent, on behalf of myself, my spouse, and my family, acknowledge that we have received and agree to be governed by the parent-student/family handbook ("Handbook").

We have read and reviewed the Handbook with Student(s). We accept and understand the policies and procedures of the School, and we accept and understand that failure to adhere to these policies and procedures is sufficient reason for dismissal, withdrawal, or non-renewal of Student(s) at the School.

We understand, acknowledge, and agree that, as the School is part of the Diocese of Fort Worth, any student/parent information or records possessed by the School may, when appropriate, be shared internally within the Diocese of Fort Worth, including its other schools, and we hereby give permission and authorize the School and Diocese to share or disclose such information in accordance with the Internal Information policy.

We understand and acknowledge that the School, being Catholic in nature, will exercise its responsibility to teach Catholic faith and morals in the fullness of truth and charity, especially as expressed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We will not publicly repudiate the teachings or traditions of the Catholic Church or act in ways that contradict the Catholic nature of the School. We will affirm, respect, and support the School's unique identity, role, and mission derived from the Catholic faith. We will cooperate fully with the School, and Student(s) will participate in all required School programming, including instruction in the Catholic faith and attendance at Mass. As the primary educator of Student(s), we agree to act in ways that promote the best interests of the Church and the School, and we will comply with the policies of the School and Diocese.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student Signature

Date

Date

*All parents/guardians with legal authority to make educational and religious decisions on behalf of the child(ren) must sign this form.